

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background

Play is one of literary genre that has two dimensions, literature dimension and art of show. As literature dimension, play more emphasize to text in dialogue that can be enjoyable and understandable only by reading. As the art of show, play more focused to showing on stage, or well known by the theater term.

Such as other literary work, play is also built by intrinsic and extrinsic elements. The intrinsic element is the elements that build the work itself from within. The extrinsic element is elements that are outside the literary work, but indirectly affect the build-up of a story of a literary work. This element is forming in the literary works, so that the reader takes which plot, character, or the other things beyond in literary works that form of story to be understood and analyzed.

The Hairy Ape (1922)<sup>1</sup> is a play written by Eugene O'Neil. He wrote this play to portray dehumanizing effects of industrialization on the workers. This play consists of eight scenes that tell about a man named Yank, he is a machine worker on a large ship. His job was to shovel coal and put it on the machine to keep the ship going. He was excommunicated from his social group because it was so modern life in that era that made the separation of social class in society. He works

---

<sup>1</sup> Richard Gray. 2004. *A History of American Literature* (UK: Blackwell Publishing), p. 458.

under a very dark ship and is caged like a gorilla in a zoo. His face was tangled, filthy, and dull because too often faced with coal in the engine room.

One day he met the daughter of a ship owner named Mildred Douglas wearing a white dress. Instantly he began to feel the difference from the daily life that only saw things in black but when he saw Mildred wearing a white dress he started trying to meet the crowd and communicate with others, even he decided to go to Manhattan. But when he was in town, he could not survive and decided to go to a zoo in Manhattan City. When at the Zoo he searched for a gorilla that was confined in his cage and chose to die in the gorilla's arms.

Chandler (2002: 1) argues semiotics in shortest definition, it is the study of signs. The concept of the sign sees that meaning arises when there is an association or relationship between signified and signifier. The sign is the unity of a signifier with an idea or signified. In other words, the signs are meaningful sound or meaningful scribble.

There are many existing semiotic models, the researchers chose the semiotic model of Roland Barthes (1967: 89). In his theory, semiotics was developed two staggered of sign, that; is the first system is denotation and the second system connotation. Barthes (1972: 113) also sees other aspect in sign, that is Myth, it is the second system of sign.

Therefore, it becomes interesting to trace the signs of what is in this play. Especially, how the sign in this play represents social life. In general, the play is

built by signs. The signs are collaborated to achieve the desired effect. The play is a textual product, so the signs are in the form of quotations.

## **1.2 Statement of Problem**

To get research results are directional, then needed a formulation of the problem. As for the formulation of the problem in this research are as follows:

1. How is rich and poor myth described in *The Hairy Ape* play?
2. How do rich and poor myth explain characters in *The Hairy Ape* play?

## **1.3 Research Objectives**

Base on the statement of problem above, the purpose of this research are as follows:

1. To explain myth rich and poor in *The Hairy Ape* play.
2. To explain characters that described rich and poor myth in *The Hairy Ape* play.

## **1.4 Research Significance**

The significance of this research is academically, theoretically, and practically.

Academically, this research is expected to provide scientific input and contribution for all parties who have an interest to develop research in the fields of semiotics.

Theoretically, this research are benefits to development in literature field, especially in play and semiotics.

Practically, this research is expected to get much deeper comprehension about Eugene O'Neill play *The Hairy Ape*, it will be helping the readers come to totally appreciation.

### 1.5 Conceptual Framework

Chandler (2002: 1) argues that semiotics in shortest definition, it is the study of signs. The concept of the sign sees that meaning arises when there is an association or relationship between signified and signifier. The sign is the unity of a signifier with an idea or signified. In other words, the signs are meaningful sound or meaningful scribble.

Barthes (1967: 89) in his theory, semiotics was developed two staggered of sign, that; is the first system is then the plane of denotation and the second system (wider than the first). the plane of connotation. *Denotation* is plane of sign who making the relations between signifier and signified to the reality, and produces explicit meaning, directly, and certainly. *Connotations* is plane of sign who making the relations between signifier and signified, that in it operating meaning not explicit, indirectly, and uncertainly. (Pilliang, 2004: 193).

Barthes also sees other aspect in sign, that is Myth. Following Barthes (1972: 113), myth lays on second level of sign, well after systems form of sign-signifier-signified, the sign will be new sign afterwards has second signs and formed the new sign. When the sign that the connotation meaning then developing be denotation meaning, then the denotation meaning will be Myth.

Roland Barthes on Mythology describe, “myth is a system of communication, that it is a message. This allows one to perceive that myth cannot possibly be an object, a concept, or an idea; it is a mode of signification, a form. Later, we shall have to assign to this form historical limits, conditions of use, and reintroduce society into it: we must nevertheless first describe it as a form.” (Barthes. 1972: 107).

Myth is a form of message or speech that must be believed to be true but can not to be proven. Etymologically, myth is a kind of speech, certainly not just any speech. One thing to note that myth is a communication system, it is a message. But the myth is not defined by the message object but by the way it tells the message.

The definition of myth in the context of old mythologies has the definition of a formation of a society oriented in the past or of historical formation that is static, eternal. Myths in the old identical sense of history, the formation of society in its time.

According to Barthes (1972: 108), that the Mythologies speech: It is therefore by no means confined to oral speech. It can consist of modes of writing or of representations; not only written discourse, but also photography, cinema, reporting, sport, shows, publicity, all these can serve as a support to mythical speech. Myths are basically all of which have representational modes. In this term, myth can not to be said simply as a stagnant object, concept, or idea but as a mode of significance.